

Message Text

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ACTION LAB-04

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 IO-13 SIL-01 AID-05 CIAE-00
COME-00 EB-08 INR-07 NSAE-00 /049 W
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R 280900Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7309

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E.O. 11652 N/A
TAGS: ILO, ELAB, NP
SUBJ: REPORT ON ILO ACTIVITIES IN NEPAL

REF: STATE 003255

1. SUMMARY. ILO HAS A MIXED RECORD IN NEPAL. WHILE MOST, IF NOT ALL, PROJECTS HAVE BEEN WELL CONCEIVED TO FILL A GENUINE NEED, IMPLEMENTATION HAS FREQUENTLY SUFFERED FROM LACK OF COOPERATION AND SUPPORT FROM THE HOST GOVERNMENT WHICH DOES NOT ALWAYS SET THE SAME PRIORITIES AS ILO. FOLLOWING IS EMBASSY'S ASSESSMENT OF SPECIFIC ILO PROJECTS IN NEPAL WITHIN LAST TWO YEARS AS REQUESTED REFTEL. END SUMMARY.

2. TRAINING OF SKILLED WORKERS FOR PUBLIC WORKS. THIS PROJECT, IN OPERATION SINCE 1972, IS CURRENTLY FUNDED THROUGH 1978 AT A LEVEL OF \$1.7 MILLION AND IS DESIGNED TO PROVIDE TRAINING TO WORKERS IN CARPENTRY, ELECTRICAL AND PLUMBING TRADES. TO DATE ABOUT 1500 WORKERS HAVE GRADUATED UNDER THE PROGRAM RUN BY THE INSTITUTE OF ENGINEERING IN KATHMANDU. INITIAL DIFFICULTIES INVOLVING INADEQUATE ILO PERSONNEL APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN OVERCOME AND THE PROJECT IS ON SCHEDULE. IT HAS SUFFERED, HOWEVER, FROM A LACK OF FOLLOW UP GRADUATES, AND

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THERE IS CONTINUING CRITICISM OF PLACEMENT PROBLEMS FOLLOWING TRAINING AND CHARGES THAT WORKERS HAVE A TENDENCY TO SLIP INTO OLD HABITS ONCE THEY ARE ON THE JOB. THE PROJECT HAS BEEN TRYING TO INTRODUCE TRAINING IN REFRIGERATION AND ELECTRONICS FOR TWO YEARS BUT HAS FAILED TO DO SO BECAUSE OF A REDUCTION IN FUNDS BY ILO. A NEW PROGRAM TO PROVIDE TRAINING IN AUTO

MECHANICS AND MAINTENANCE WILL SERVE A REAL NEED AND HAS HIGH HOPE OF SUCCESS SINCE IT WILL BE IMPLEMENTED IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE GOVERNMENT ROADS DEPARTMENT WHICH HAS ASSURED THE INSTITUTE AND ILO THAT IT WILL PLACE GRADUATES. THE PROJECT IS, ON BALANCE, A SUCCESS PRIMARILY BECAUSE OF GOVERNMENT SUPPORT. THERE IS NO TRIPARTITE PARTICIPATION IN THIS OR ANY OTHER ILO PROJECT, PRIMARILY BECAUSE LABOR ORGANIZATIONS ARE ALL BUT NON-EXISTENT IN THE COUNTRY. THE SKILLED WORKERS PROJECT DOES, HOWEVER, SEEK ADVICE FROM THE GOVERNMENT'S DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AS WELL AS POTENTIAL EMPLOYERS IN ORDER TO DESIGN ITS PROGRAM.

3. HOTEL MANAGEMENT TRAINING CENTER. THIS ILO FUNDED PROJECT HAS BEEN IN SERIOUS TROUBLE SINCE ITS INCEPTION IN 1972. ORIGINALLY DESIGNED TO FILL A SERIOUS GAP IN MIDDLE AND TOP MANAGEMENT IN THE COUNTRY'S TOURISM INDUSTRY, THE PROJECT WHEN IN OPERATION HAS DEVOLVED INTO A SCHOOL FOR WAITERS, CHAMBERMAIDS AND OTHER SEMI-SKILLED WORKERS IN THE HOTEL INDUSTRY. MISMANAGEMENT, LACK OF GOVERNMENT SUPPORT, AND SERIOUS PERSONNEL PROBLEMS HAVE HARMED THE PROJECT. AFTER NEARLY FIVE YEARS THE GOVERNMENT HAS ONLY RECENTLY PROVIDED TRAINING FACILITIES NECESSARY FOR THE PROGRAM AND EVEN NOW THE PROJECT IS CLOSED WHILE THOSE FACILITIES UNDERGO EXTENSIVE RENOVATION. WHILE WELL CONCEIVED, THE PROJECT HAS BEEN PLAGUED THROUGHOUT BY FAVORITISM (BORDERING ON CORRUPTION) IN CHOOSING CANDIDATES FOR TRAINING. ASSUMING THAT THE NEW FACILITIES WILL BE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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COMPLETED SOON, THE PROJECT COULD BE A LIMITED SUCCESS SINCE ILO HAS BROUGHT IN A NEW TEAM OF EXPERTS WHO APPEAR TO KNOW THEIR BUSINESS, UNLIKE THEIR PREDECESSORS. IF SO, THE PROJECT CAN SERVE A USEFUL PURPOSE IN PROVIDING TRAINED STAFF FOR THE LARGE NUMBERS OF NEW HOTELS IN KATHMANDU. AGAIN, THERE HAS BEEN NO INPUT FROM LABOR, ALTHOUGH HOTEL MANAGEMENT AND THE GOVERNMENT'S OFFICE OF TOURISM ARE REPRESENTED ON THE PROJECT BOARD.

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4. ASSISTANCE TO COTTAGE INDUSTRIES. THIS PROJECT IS FUNDED BY NORWEGIAN DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE BUT IMPLEMENTED BY ILO. IT IS DESIGNED TO PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO THE WEAVING, FORGING AND WOODWORKING INDUSTRIES IN SUIKHET, A VILLAGE IN THE WEST OF NEPL. WE HAVE LITTLE INFORMATION ON THE PROJECT'S SUCCESS TO DATE, ALTHOUGH SOME UNDP OFFICIALS HAVE COMPLAINED ABOUT LACK OF HOST GOVERNMENT SUPPORT IN PROVIDING COUNTERPARTS IN THE PROGRAM. CERTAINLY THERE IS A NEED FOR SUCH A PROJECT IN THE AREA.

5. REHABILITATION OF DISABLED PERSONS. ONCE AGAIN THIS PROJECT IS WELL CONCEIVED IN CONFORMITY WITH UNDP COUNTRY PROGRAM, AND COULD SERVE USEFUL PURPOSE. IT HAS NOT BEEN IMPLEMENTED, HOWEVER, BECAUSE OF LACK OF ILO FUNDING. ILO HAS PROVIDED EXPERT WHO, IN CONSULTATION WITH GOVERNMENT, HAS DRAWN UP PROJECT PROPOSAL WHICH WAS TO HAVE BEGUN LAST YEAR.

6. EMPLOYMENT STUDY. AS PART OF ASIAN REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT STUDY, ILO PROPOSED PROJECT TO CREATE MANPOWER INVENTORY IN NEPAL. AFTER HAVING ACCEPTED PROPOSAL, GOVERNMENT PLANNING COMMISSION FAILED TO PROVIDE LOCAL FUNDING AND PROJECT HAS NOW BEEN SHELVED.

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7. WHILE WE SYMPATHIZE WITH DIFFICULTIES IN OBTAINING GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR FOREIGN AID PROJECTS, ILO APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN MORE IMPAIRED THAN MOST DONORS IN OBTAINING KIND OF COMMITMENT NECESSARY TO CARRY OUT PROJECTS SUCCESSFULLY. OTHER PROJECTS, SUCH AS HOTEL TRAINING, HAVE BEEN PLAGUED WITH INFERIOR FOREIGN TECHNICIANS WHO HAVE ALSO LACKED POLITICAL AND SOCIAL EMPATHY NECESSARY TO GAIN PUBLIC AND GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR PROJECTS. ILO (AND UNDP) IS AWARE OF THESE SHORTCOMINGS AND, IN ALL FAIRNESS, APPEARS TO HAVE TAKEN STEPS

IN RECENT YEARS TO IMPROVE. BUT BASED ON RECORD TO
DATE WE WOULD HAVE TO RATE ILO AS ONE OF LEAST SUCCESSFUL
PROGRAMS IN COUNTRY.
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